



News for employees, retirees & partners



Agencies and Partners Prepare for Fire Season

DURANGO - The Durango Airtanker Base hosted its annual Safety "Fly In" this month. Flight crews and ground operators discussed communications and safety, with a focus on inter-agency approaches to wildfire response.

A U.S. Air Force Reserve C-130 flew in from Peterson Air Force Base near Colorado Springs. The four-engine turboprop can carry 3,000 gallons of fire retardant in a self-contained Modular Airborne Firefighting System (MAFFS).

MAFFS is a self-contained unit loaded into the aircraft for aerial firefighting, which allows the USFS to use military aircraft as emergency backup resources to its civilian air tanker fleet. The C-130 can fly as low as 150 feet above ground to drop retardant, according to pilot Lt. Col. Luke Thompson. Also on hand was a British Aerospace 146, which can carry 3,000 gallons of retardant.



A C-130 flew into the Durango Airtanker Base for the event. The military aircraft can be equipped for firefighting.



Participants tour the interior slurry delivery system in the contract air tanker prepositioned in Durango.

The National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, Idaho, has prepositioned the contract air tanker in Durango, but it will be deployed to other areas, as needed.

The single-engine air tanker under contract to Colorado at the event will also prepositioned in Durango. It can carry 800 gallons of retardant for missions within the state. Helicopters stationed at Mesa Verde NP and the air tanker base were also on hand.

Event participants represented the San Juan NF Columbine RD fire crew, Craig Hotshots, State of Colorado, Southern Ute Indian Tribe, Los Pinos and Upper Pine volunteer fire departments, interagency dispatchers, Durango-Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, Mesa Verde National Park and helitack pilots and crews.

- Ann Bond

SAN JUAN PUBLIC LANDS CENTER



(Left to Right) Ashley Hitchell, Stephanie Kelley, Christy Garrou and Laurie Ball

Budget Shop Plays Musical Chairs

DURANGO - With the retirement of San Juan NF Budget Officer Linda Knipp, the Operations Group will be doing some fancy footwork to cover the bases until her replacement can be hired.

San Juan Budget Analyst Stephanie Kelley will be on a temporary detail into the Budget Officer position. Administrative Support Clerk Christy Garrou will detail into Stephanie's job handling budget reports and real property inventory, which aligns with her previous experience in personal property and budget work.

Covering Christy's personal property, correspondence and administrative responsibilities will be Pathways Intern Ashley Hitchell and Administrative Operations Assistant Laurie Ball. Christy and Laurie

will help Ashley in learning her new admin duties. Each of the detailers will be learning new jobs and taking on additional duties, while training their temporary replacements, so please bear with us as we make this transition. Over the summer, we'll be advertising for a new permanent budget officer.

- Ron Duvall



Helping Summer Visitors

DURANGO - Visitor Information Services is a busy job at all San Juan NF and BLM offices during the summer, and the agencies team up with the San Juan Mountains Association (SJMA) to cover all the bases. **(From Left to Right)**

Lilly Spencer returns as an SJMA volunteer, after interning here in 2011 while a student at Durango High School. Mother Beth works at the PLC, and father Cliff is Superintendent at Mesa Verde NP. Lilly just graduated and is headed to college in Colorado Springs at the end of August. Fort Lewis College student **Jessica Dudash** will also be working the front desk as a USFS intern 13 hours a week through mid-August.

BAYFIELD - **Dalton Dorrell** is helping out with VIS through SJMA for the Columbine Office and Silverton Public Lands Office. Dalton just graduated from Bayfield High School and begins college this fall at Western State Colorado University. He plans to pursue a degree in Federal and Outdoor Recreation. Dalton first volunteered for Columbine at age 13.

PAGOSA SPRINGS - **Liz Alley** is working for SJMA in VIS for the Pagosa RD. Liz worked VIS part-time for the USFS at the Pagosa Office from 1997 - 2000. In the interim, she worked part-time director of a local family resource center and helped local families learn to grow and harvest their own food.

SILVERTON - With the summer reopening of the **Silverton Public Lands Office**, three days per week are being covered by two SJMA seasonal VIS staff. **Bob Boeder**, a local author, is returning after helping out over the past two summers. His books - *Hardrock Fever*, *Silverton Burning*, and *The Chinese Laundry* - are on sale SJMA Bookstores in Silverton and Durango.

Charlie Schmalz, one of the original SJMA staff to provide support in opening an office for the Forest Service and BLM in Silverton, is also back on board for the summer.

- Alan Peterson



San Juan Public Lands Center, Durango

SAN JUAN PUBLIC LANDS CENTER

Power to the Pedal

DURANGO - The final tally is in for the National Bike Commute Challenge, in which 10 intrepid San Juan NF bike commuters participated during May. The San Juan Team ranked 303 out of 1,945 teams nationwide.

San Juan NF bicycle commuters rode more than 100 trips to the office during May Bike Challenge Month, logging 992 total miles and commuting almost 50 percent of the time.

By leaving our autos at home, we saved 972 pounds of carbon from release into the atmosphere, and in celebration of health and wellness, burned more than 48,000 calories.

Nationwide, Commute Challengers made 127,000 fewer car trips during May and rode 1.7 million miles, while burning 84 million calories. The almost 15,000 participants prevented 1.6 million pounds of CO₂ from release into the atmosphere—the equivalent emissions of 950,000 gallons of gasoline.

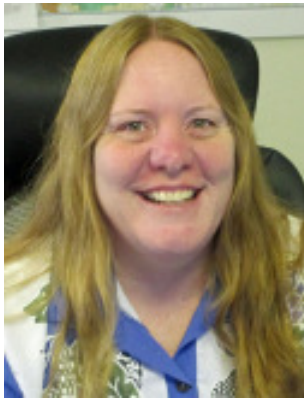
“Thanks to all who participated, with special thanks to co-captain Christy Garrou,” said Commute Challenge Captain Kate Shepherd. “Until next May, keep bike commuting, and may the wind always be at your back.”

Captain Kate gave special commendations to Walt Brown for best all-round numbers and participation, Jessey Ramirez for doing double-duty with young Marcus in tow, and Chris Tipton as the most animated and enthusiastic rider.

- Ann Bond, a Fellow Bicycle Commuter



Jessey and son Marcus head off to work and daycare, respectively, on a cool May morning.



Meet Kathy

DURANGO - Kathy Hodnett will come on board this summer as the new San Juan NF Dispatch Center Manager in charge of emergency communications and overall activities of the dispatch center.

Kathy is coming to us from northwestern California, where she has been Assistant

Center Manager for the Fortuna Interagency Command Center on the Six Rivers NF. She started her federal career in 1984 on the Six Rivers NF Orleans RD on an engine crew and also worked in silviculture.

Kathy became a dispatcher in the Fortuna Command Center in 1999 and Assistant Center Manager in 2007. Earlier this year, she detailed as Center Manager on the Modoc NF.

Kathy has been a member of the ROSS training cadre since 2003 and the D-310 cadre since 2005. She holds a Certificate of Study in Wildland Fire Management from Humboldt State University.

Kathy and husband David have a 17-year-old son, Whit, and 14-year-old daughter, Kaylie. She enjoys fishing and gardening.

“I’m excited about my new position,” Kathy says. “I look forward to meeting new folks and experiencing four seasons in the garden.”

- Ann Bond

Get Up, Stand Up

Research shows that sitting for long periods of time is bad for your health, and even a healthy amount of exercise doesn’t make up for the ill effects.

The average adult spends 50-70% of his or her time sitting, which uses up one metabolic equivalent of energy expenditure. Walking uses four times as much energy.

Doctors say prolonged sitting puts your body in energy storage mode, causing a loss of blood flow to your lower extremities. Side effects include increased resistance to insulin, increased glucose levels, reduced good cholesterol and increased bad ones. Sitting for more than six hours a day can increase the risk of blood clots, obesity, kidney and heart disease. Studies also show most people spend more time sitting on work days compared to leisure days.

What can you do?

- Take stand up breaks at the back of the room during meetings or hold walking meetings.
- Position your computer on a high desk with a stool so you can take turns sitting and standing.
- Take a break every hour to visit the water fountain, mailroom, restroom, copy room, etc.
- Don’t email or phone your officemates - walk to their desks and talk to them.
- Stand up while on the phone and flex your calf muscles to increase blood flow.
- Take advantage of the San Juan NF Wellness Program.
- After work, do chores, garden, go to the gym, take a walk or ride a bike, etc.

-Ann Bond

COLUMBINE RANGER DISTRICT



Chasey Lesmeister

Former Seasonals Honored

BAYFIELD - The Columbine RD is proud to announce that three of its former fire seasonal employees have received coveted peer-nominated awards.

Chasey Lesmeister, a Columbine fire seasonal in 2009/10/11, was honored as *2012 Rookie Hotshot of the Year* by the Pleasant Valley Hotshots. Chasey returns to the Pleasant Valley Hotshots, stationed out of the Tonto NF in Arizona, this year with hopes of soon beginning work for Porsche or BMW as a certified mechanic.

Grady Hall, a Columbine fire seasonal in 2010, was named *2011 Hotshot of the Year* award for his work on the Pleasant Valley Hotshots, where he returns this year.

Jeff Rasmussen, a Columbine fire seasonal in 2009, received the award for *2010 Rookie Hotshot of the Year* for his work with the Idaho Panhandle Hotshots in Northern Idaho. This year he'll return to the Idaho Panhandle NFs in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho for his fourth season as a lead sawyer and is on the alternate list to attend rookie smokejumper training in North Cascades Smokejumper Base.

- Stan Sparks



Grady Hall



Jeff Rasmussen



BAYFIELD - Columbine District Ranger Matt Janowiak takes a dive in the *Dunk the Ranger Booth* in a Team Building Exercise at the annual Columbine Orientation.

Meet Captain Clay

DURANGO - Clayton Rizzi joined the Columbine RD as Engine Captain this spring. Clayton came from the Cleveland NF Palomar RD in San Diego County where he spent five years on Type III engines. For the past two years, he was squad boss for the Palomar Hotshots.

Clayton grew up in Alamosa on a 40-acre farm, where he enjoyed fly fishing, hunting and team roping. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Secondary Education

from Adams State College.

Clayton worked for the Colorado State Forest Service for 8 summers, then spent two summers as a seasonal on the Rio Grande NF. His first permanent position was as an engineer on the Cimarron NG in Elkhart, Kansas, for four years.

He and wife Cali, an accountant, have two boys; Teal, 3, and Cole, 1. The family enjoys camping, movies, road trips, gardening, and waking up at anytime of the night.

- Ann Bond



Columbine RD, Bayfield



Smokey and friends enjoying Our Nation's Capitol <just for fun>

COLUMBINE RANGER DISTRICT



Justin's the New Ranch Tech

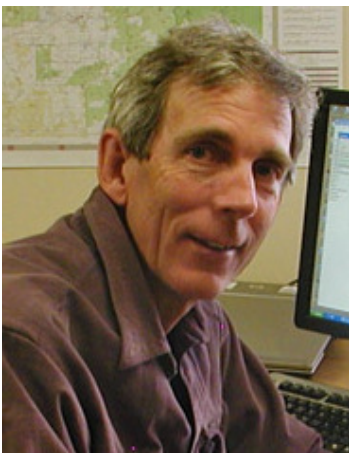
DURANGO - Justin Marler is the new Columbine RD Range Technician focusing on invasive species mitigation, grazing compliance, and rangeland monitoring and improvements.

Justin started his federal career in 2009 as a Biological Plant Technician on the GMUG NFs Norwood RD. He then moved to Dolores as Range Technician for both the BLM Tres Rios Field Office and San Juan NF Dolores RD. He worked on the Dolores River Restoration Project for the past three years, removing tamarisk and treating other noxious weeds along 80 miles of the Dolores River.

Justin holds a Bachelor of Arts in Physical Geography from the University of Colorado, Boulder. He was born and raised in Durango.

"I'm excited for the opportunity to have a positive impact on the lands I love and be able to contribute back to the community I grew up in," he says. - Ann Bond

PAGOSA RANGER DISTRICT



Scott's Headin' North

PAGOSA SPRINGS - Scott Wagner, San Juan NF Forester for the past 12 years, is leaving the Pagosa RD for the Boise NF in July to become Zone Forester/Silviculturist for two districts.

"Scott has been instrumental to the success of this Ranger District and Forest, while providing smiles for all of us," says Pagosa District Ranger Kevin Khung. "The Boise is gaining a very special person."

Scott started on the San Juan as a contractor working on timber inventory, Mexican spotted owl, old growth and NEPA contracts.

In 1995 he was hired to digitize stand exam points for Forest GIS. That project evolved into a position as Biological Scientist, continuing his work in GIS. Scott moved to Pagosa in 1999 as Supervisory Forestry Technician leading the timber crew and moved into his current position as Timber and Fuels Forester in 2001.

Scott holds a Bachelor's degree in Natural Resource Management from Colorado State University.

He and wife Catherine enjoy skiing, mountain biking and hiking. Catherine, an artist, designs knitwear and fabrics, paints with watercolor and makes hand-bound books.

Scott says he is most proud of his work on forest restoration and fire management on the Pagosa RD.

"The San Juan is a really special place," Scott says. "I will miss all the great people I've worked with and learned from over the years here."

- Ann Bond



Pagosa RD, Pagosa Springs

Congrats to Steve



In May, the Colorado-Wyoming Society of American Foresters presented its *Field Forester Award* to Steve Hartvigsen, Pagosa RD Supervisory Forester, for his dedication in applying forestry based on sound, scientific methods and adaptive management strategies. We all join Smokey Bear in congratulating Steve!

DOLORES RANGER DISTRICT



Kathy Honored by her Peers

DOLORES - The *Laurel Kagan Wiley Excellence and Dedication in Wildlife Conservation Award* for 2013 has been posthumously bestowed upon Dolores Public Lands Office Wildlife Biologist Kathy Nickell. Kathy passed away on July 4, 2011, surrounded by family, friends and pets after battling breast cancer.

The award is presented every other year to honor a BLM biologist. Kathy was recognized for "showing incredible courage, determination, perseverance, and effectiveness in the face of tremendous adversity, both personal and professional."

Award plaques were sent both to Kathy's parents and to the Tres Rios Field Office. In addition, Kathy's name will be added to the permanent award display at the San Luis Valley Public Lands Office in Monte Vista.

- Ann Bond



Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper (center) at the signing ceremony last month near Dolores.

Governor Signs Conservation Easement Bill at Bear Creek

DOLORES - Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper and representatives of the Montezuma Land Conservancy and San Juan NF took a short hike on the Bear Creek Trail in late May to reach a private parcel for the signing of a state bill to increase state tax credits available for conservation easement donations.

The signing ceremony took place on property under conservation easement owned by Kevin and Diane Toman. The parcel is surrounded by the San Juan NF along the Dolores River and San Juan Scenic Skyway.

Conservation easements allow private property owners to receive tax credits for



This private parcel under conservation easement surrounded by the San Juan NF was the setting for the signing ceremony.

placing limits on the development of their land to ensure scenic corridors and open spaces can be enjoyed by future generations.

The bill will increase the overall amount available for state tax credits for conservation easements by \$11 million, encouraging approximately 40 more transactions annually, with the potential of conserving tens of thousands of additional acres per year for future generations in Colorado.

- Patrick McCoy



Dolores Public Lands Office, Dolores

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